CHAPTER FIVE

CONTACT AND COLONIZATION, A.D. 1500 TO 1775

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

- ☐ Initial European contacts, A.D. 1492 to 1607
- ☐ Colonial period, 1607 to 1775

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

- ☐ Giovanni da Verrazano pens the earliest written record of contact in the region in 1524.
- ☐ Susquehannock immigrants from the upper Susquehanna River supplant Shenks Ferry culture people in the lower Pennsylvania Piedmont between 1550 and 1575.
- ☐ Early Spanish and English colonization attempts fail between 1571 and 1585.
- ☐ The Powhatan chiefdom develops along the James River Coastal Plain, by 1600.
- ☐ The first successful English colony, Virginia, is established at Jamestown, 1607.
- ☐ Virginian tobacco becomes the subject of massive European consumer demand after 1612.
- ☐ Enslaved Africans are first brought to the region in 1619.
- ☐ Maryland is founded at St. Mary's City, 1634.
- ☐ Virginian trader William Claiborne is forcibly ejected from Maryland, 1638.
- ☐ Protestant Parliamentarians led by Richard Ingles seize and plunder Maryland in 1645 during the English Civil War.
- ☐ Maryland's 1649 Act of Toleration protects Catholic, Protestant, and Quaker worship. The Act is repealed in1654.

- ☐ Puritan Parliamentarians and the Crown fight the English Civil War, 1642 to 1649. Charles I is executed and England is declared a Commonwealth, 1649.
- ☐ War and disease reduce the regional Indian population to 2,400, one-tenth of its pre-contact size, by 1650. Colonial population rises from zero to 13,000 during the same years.
- ☐ Charles II restores Royal prerogatives, 1665.
- ☐ Susquehannocks are dispersed and Jamestown is burned during Bacon's Rebellion, 1675 to 1676.
- ☐ The 1677 Treaty of Middle Plantation (now Williamsburg), reduces Virginia's Native American population to tributary status.
- ☐ William Penn is granted the charter for Pennsylvania, 1681.
- ☐ The authority of the Commonwealth's parliamentary system is affirmed after James II is deposed during the Glorious Revolution, 1688.
- ☐ Georgian architecture first becomes the model for high style housing in the region between the1690s and the 1720s.
- ☐ The College of William and Mary is founded in Williamsburg, 1693.
- ☐ Maryland moves its capital to Annapolis, 1695.
- ☐ Virginia's capital is moved from Jamestown to Williamsburg,1699.
- ☐ African Americans make up half the region's workforce and forty percent of its population by 1700.
- ☐ The Act of Union joins Scotland with England, Wales, and Ireland into the United Kingdom of Great Britain, 1707.

- ☐ The first theater in America opens in Williamsburg, 1717.
- ☐ Baltimore, Maryland is founded, 1729.
- ☐ Lancaster, Pennsylvania is established, 1730.
- ☐ The Great Awakening religious revival sweeps the region between 1738 and 1745.
- ☐ Richmond, Virginia is founded, 1742.
- ☐ Petersburg, Virginia is founded in 1748. Alexandria, Virginia is established during the following year.
- ☐ Colonial population rises to 380,000 in 1750-African Americans make up more than one third of this population. A cooler and wetter climatic regime, known as the Little Ice-Age, begins around this time.
- ☐ Charlottesville, Virginia incorporated, 1762.
- ☐ The first tax levies, collectively known as the Intolerable Acts, arouse discontent throughout the region, 1764.
- ☐ Survey is completed on the Mason-Dixon Line between Maryland and Pennsylvania, 1767.
- ☐ Total population in the region reaches 700,000 by 1775.

AN ECOLOGY OF PEOPLE AND PLACE

People

As it had been for more than twelve millennia, the Chesapeake was an exclusively Indian world when European navigators began their first tentative landings on North American shores in the early 1500s. Unlike their ancestors, who lived at the mercy of the climate and the seasons, Late Woodland people used their abilities to produce food, develop ever more sophisticated tools and weapons, and organize larger, more efficient social and political organizations to free themselves from complete dependence on their environment. They built their communities in clearings, surrounded by dense forests and bordering freshwater and salt water wetlands. The larger of these towns were fortified communities of as many as a hundred roundhouses and longhouses. These houses consisted of bark or grass covered sapling frames.

All Late Woodland towns were located on or close to well drained, fertile soils. Such soils were required by farmers growing corn, beans, squash, and tobacco. As in earlier Woodland times, their small fields had been slashed and burned from the forest floor. Groups of families and friends from these towns moved periodically to smaller camps to fish, hunt game, and gather shellfish and wild plants in season. And entire communities relocated every ten or twenty years to new lands, when they had used up the resources at their former site. Concentrated within strictly defined areas and surrounded by vast, uninhabited borderlands, these Native American heartlands were widely separated islands of settlement in otherwise unbroken expanses of the northeastern woodlands.

Along the coast, many of these settlements were linked into political units held together by powerful chiefs. Among the more influential of these units were the Powhatan chiefdom along the

James and York Rivers and the Potomac chiefdom in the Rappahannock and Potomac Valleys. Supported by priests and warriors, these chiefdoms held sway over territories measuring many hundreds of square miles. Farther west in the Piedmont, Iroquoian speaking Susquehannock people moved south from the upper Susquehanna River. By the late 1500s, they occupied the lands of a nation known to archeologists as Shenks Ferry people. To the south of these lands, Monacans, Manahoacs, and other Piedmont Indian people found themselves increasingly at war with expanding coastal plain chiefdoms and the newly arrived Susquehannocks. These wars came about when coastal chiefdom and Susquehannock warriors and hunters pressed into upland Piedmont forests in search of white-tailed deer, bears and other game animals far less numerous in their own homelands farther east.

This wholly Indian world changed forever with the coming of Europeans. The open waters of Chesapeake Bay became the stage for the earliest direct contacts between these peoples in the region. The earliest written record of contact in the region is a chronicle of the 1524 voyage of Giovanni da Verrazano, an Italian captain sailing in the service of King Francis 1 of France. Other early impressions were recorded by Spanish priests from Florida, who tried to establish a mission at Ajacán on the James River in 1570, and English Roanoke colonists, who attempted to settle along the nearby North Carolina coast in 1585. The Europeans marveled at what they considered the strangeness of the inhabitants' customs, the temperate nature of the climate, and the lushness of the land.

The Native subjects of these observations paddled their log dugout canoes into the Bay to visit the ships anchored off their shores and watched the strangers scribble on pieces of paper.

Attracted first by the calm waters of the sheltered bay, European mariners soon charted deeper channels, where oceangoing sailing ships could drop anchor in sheltered coves and inlets.

Trade and commerce dominated initial contacts on these waters. The local inhabitants exchanged furs, food, and facts for metal tools, glass beads, and other European items brought by the growing and diversifying group of visitors. Most of these were men of different nationalities and faiths who only stayed for a few days or weeks. Others tried to remain longer, but they were inexperienced and poorly supplied. Initial colonial efforts, such as the Ajacán mission on the James and English Roanoke, collapsed quickly. But the English learned from past mistakes, and their Virginia Company managed to establish the first permanent European settlement at Jamestown in 1607. Colonists led by captains John Smith and Christopher Newport soon fanned out along the coastal plain. They were searching for gold, fur, potent ginseng roots, and a hallucinogenic plant they called Jimson (Jamestown) weed. No gold was found, the fur trade proved unreliable, the ginseng roots were not potent enough to satisfy consumers, and Jimson weed never caught on. Two other plants, growing not wild in forests but cultivated in Indian gardens, would become the economic mainstays of English colonization along the Chesapeake. One of these, Sweet or Indian corn, would ultimately feed much of the world. The other, tobacco, would soon become the region's wildly popular and uniquely irresistible export.

Word of the riches to be had in the Chesapeake soon attracted settlers. Thousands began sailing to the region from southern English ports. Malaria, yellow fever, and dysentery killed many of these men and women during their first years of seasoning, as the process of acclimatization was known in the region. In fact, more people died from these diseases than in the seemingly endless wars fought with the region's Native inhabitants between 1610 and 1675. But neither the

threats of disease nor the dangers of attack discouraged settlers searching for trade, wealth, and deeds to pieces of the region's land.

A continual stream of English immigrants replenished the numbers Jamestown lost to disease and war. First brought to the Chesapeake in 1619, a small, slowly growing number of enslaved Africans added to the region's population. Other people attracted to the Chesapeake's bounty settled at various places in the region. For example, the Eries and other native people – driven from their Great Lakes homelands by Iroquois warriors – tried to settle in the Piedmont. And traders traveled south from the Dutch New Netherland colony along the Hudson River in search of pelts and plunder. One of them, a central European named Augustine Hermann, established a settlement, christened Bohemia Manor in honor of his homeland, at the northeast end of the Bay in 1662.

Virginian claims to the region did not go unchallenged. Powhatan leaders resisted Jamestown colonists until their final defeat in 1646. Susquehannocks fought too, armed with muskets obtained from Dutch traders and Swedish colonists, who were settling their own colony on the banks of the Delaware River between 1638 and 1655. The Susquehannocks challenged anyone asserting authority over their upper Bay domain. And the Spanish authorities issued protests from their capital at Saint Augustine, continually threatening to drive Virginians away from a region they considered part of Florida.

English Catholics established the proprietary colony of Maryland in 1634, led by a favorite of the king named Leonard Calvert, or Lord Baltimore. This marked the most significant challenge to Virginia's authority in the region. Maryland colonists – traveling on transports named the Ark and the Dove – established their first settlement on the banks of a deep Potomac River

bay at a place they christened St. Mary's City. The new settlers purchased land there from the local Yeocomico people, but they soon found themselves embroiled in disputes with both Susquehannock warriors and Virginian colonists, who resented their presence and claimed their land.

These disputes periodically broke out into open warfare. In 1635, for example, the Calverts confronted a Virginian settler named William Claiborne. In 1631, Claiborne had set up a trading post at the southern tip of Kent Island, near present day Annapolis, to dominate trade with Susquehannocks controlling access to fur sources from the interior. He was defeated by Marylander's in a noisy but relatively bloodless naval skirmish on the Pocomoke River in 1635, but he continued to fight to remain on Kent Island. Though driven from the province in 1638, he carried on the contest Maryland's from Virginia.

Over-hunting and warfare caused the collapse of the fur trade by mid-century. Plantations such as Martin's Hundred, Clift's Plantation, and Governor's Land replaced trading posts as the most important settlements on the Bay. Planters first erected hastily constructed, earthfast structures whose wooden support posts were sunk directly into the ground rather than in stone, brick, or cement foundations. Although earthfast construction allowed settlers to build houses quickly and cheaply, such foundations rotted quickly in the wet soils of the region. More substantial structures, known as great or manor houses, only began appearing in large numbers later in the seventeenth century. Most of these buildings were frame and brick edifices resting on stone or masonry foundations and constructed in the high styles then popular in England.

Whatever their size or level of style, settlers erected their plantations on rich, black soils along navigable stretches of waterways coursing through the coastal plain. The English colonists

quickly revealed a preference for home sites, fields, and other tracts already cleared by Indians as English families moved onto lands purchased or seized from their original owners. These colonists depended on coastal plain waterways to link their scattered sites - plantations, farms, factories, tobacco storehouses (also known as rollhouses, a reference to the large, barrel-like casks known as hogsheads used to store and convey tobacco from farms to docks), shops, churches, courthouses, taverns, and inns (called ordinaries) – with the few small cities established during the first century of colonization. These included Jamestown, Williamsburg, and St. Mary's City.

Settlers milled lumber cut from local forests to build shallow drafted one or two masted sailing ships known as shallops and other small craft. These were used to ply the shallower tidewater bays and inlets, where English colonists located most of their settlements. Slowly, the Bay grew into an important commercial artery. Oceangoing sailing ships carrying settlers, slaves, and imports from Europe, Africa, and the Caribbean laid up alongside various docks to take on cargoes of lumber, grain, tobacco, and other Chesapeake products. On shore, small fishing communities grew up alongside major port towns. Tidal water and wind powered mills and pumps began draining more accessible wetlands for fresh groundwater.

European settlers faced challenges they could not have predicted. For example, the tidewater soils – well watered and highly organic – were initially too rich for European crops. Wheat planted in new fields grew extravagantly abundant foliage, but produced little grain. Tobacco, however, thrived in such soils. But tobacco was a demanding crop, requiring constant care and exhausting even the richest ground after three or four years. Large amounts of cow, horse, pig, and chicken manure spread on these spent fields could restore the degree of fertility needed for wheat, corn, flax, and other crops, but manuring was time consuming and expensive.

Instead, because the expanses of land in the tidewater seemed limitless, most planters abandoned their old fields and temporary support structures and moved on. Such practices soon produced the tidewater landscape that colonial observers decried – one of broken down farms and weed strewn, exhausted fields.

Demand for labor increased as cultivation consumed ever larger expanses of new lands. Plantation owners used indentured servants, free laborers, and, increasingly, enslaved Africans to grow tobacco for export and to raise corn, cotton, flax, cattle, and pigs for local consumption. African Americans made up fully half the region's workforce by 1700. Not all Africans coming to Chesapeake Bay labored as slaves. Indeed, most involuntary laborers were impoverished Europeans who had agreed to work for a stipulated number of years for landowners willing to pay their passage. African servants of frontier traders occasionally played important roles, establishing close relationships with Indian clients. By learning Indian languages and becoming familiar with their customs, several became significant culture brokers, go-betweens possessing skills essential to conduct business and diplomacy among people belonging to vastly different cultures.

As conflict continued to plague the region, diplomatic skills became increasingly important. Intercolonial struggles and wars with Indians devastated communities everywhere. Conflicts between rich and poor and between those favoring local control and those defending royal privilege sometimes broke out into open warfare. And a combination of economic competition, border disputes, and religious disagreements kept Virginia, Maryland, and their provincial neighbors to the north and south in constant conflict.

Old World struggles, too, spilled across the ocean to ensnare Chesapeake colonists. These included the English Civil War of 1642-1649, the Glorious Revolution of 1688, and the four

European imperial wars fought in the Americas by Britain, France, and Spain between 1689 and 1760. The first shots of this last war, known as the Seven Year's or French and Indian War, were fired in 1754 by troops led by a young Virginian militiaman named George Washington. Washington's troops were contesting French expansion into Western Pennsylvania lands claimed by his province.

Other disputes dragged on for years. The protracted boundary controversy between Pennsylvania and Maryland, which had begun when Pennsylvania received its charter in 1681, was only settled with the completion of the Mason-Dixon survey line in 1767. Protestants periodically tried to drive away Catholic colonists, such as when Puritans supported Parliamentary partisan Richard Ingle's seizure of Maryland from the Catholic Calverts in 1645, during the English Civil War. At other times, Maryland Catholics tried to suppress Protestant denominations. And Protestants also fought among themselves in these years. Anglicans supporting the king periodically clashed with militant Puritans; Maryland Catholics allied themselves with one Protestant faction or another when political struggles swept through the region. Finally, but not eagerly or in an organized manner, contending provinces and factions banded together as best they could to resist both Indian attacks and the threatened invasions of rival European powers.

Native and new diseases continued to ravage communities without regard to their politics, religion, or race. Indian nations, unable to replenish populations devastated by war and new diseases such as smallpox, were forced to submit to English rule. The English were able to replenish lost numbers with a seemingly endless flow of new immigrants and supplies from the mother country and other colonies. Drawing on their vast support network, which stretched

across the North Atlantic world, the English finally managed to secure their political control over Chesapeake Bay's coastal plain by 1700.

The English employed a variety of frameworks to govern their colonies. Virginia began as a charter colony under the control of the Virginia Company. The Crown granted charters to boards of corporate stockholders extending rights to colonize and govern specific regions or areas not yet reduced to royal control. In 1624, Virginia also became the first English province to become a royal colony under the direct control of the Crown. Maryland and Pennsylvania, by contrast, were organized as proprietary colonies under the control of powerful proprietors granted authority over particular areas by the English crown. The Penn family was given control of the government and all lands within Pennsylvania; the Calvert family, whose successive heads held the title Lord Baltimore, had the same rights in Maryland. Both families held monopolies on the sale and rental of all provincial lands within their proprietary bounds, and both zealously maintained these rights up to the time of the Revolution.

The English organized their colonies into political units, each with its own boundaries, rights, and responsibilities. They called these units provinces, counties, parishes, townships, municipalities, and hundreds. The origin and meaning of hundreds – and the exact amount of land they included – are only vaguely understood today. We do know that hundreds were judicial districts, larger than parishes and smaller than counties. An area could be considered a hundred if it either contained a hundred eligible voters or could mobilize a hundred militiamen.

Social boundaries, too, became more pronounced, as profits from free and slave labor concentrated wealth in the hands of powerful families and, depending on the type of colony, proprietary authorities, corporate directors, or placemen appointed to positions of responsibility

by the Crown. Governors-general, appointed by the Crown and responsible for both the governance and defense of their colonies, consulted with provincial councils and assemblies made up of these new elites. By 1700, these groups had established new state capitals at Annapolis in Maryland (1695) and at Williamsburg in Virginia (1699). County courts and community churches were established in every population center. The legal and religious needs of isolated communities were served by judges and ministers making regularly scheduled circuits through thinly populated districts.

Numbers and densities of English and African populations increased dramatically in most parts of the coastal plain in the 1700s. Population expansion and the closing of established harbors such as Port Tobacco after being filled with silt eroded from cleared fields and forests, required construction of new cities and towns. Many, such as Baltimore (established in 1729), were built alongside wide harbors providing sheltered deep water anchorages for large numbers of ocean going vessels. Others were constructed on level plots of land near rapids. Such plots were highly valued, as they could both accommodate warehouses and provide the fall of water needed to power mill wheels. The larger of these towns were built at the heads of navigation of rivers (the uppermost limits of ocean going boating) in fall line locales such as Richmond on the James (founded at the site of Shoccoe's Warehouse in 1742), Petersburg on the Appomattox (established in 1748), and Alexandria on the Potomac (founded at the Hunting Creek warehouse in 1749).

Although swamps and pine barrens were hard to penetrate, farms grew on clear cut, arable land throughout the coastal plain as more enslaved Africans were brought into the provinces of Maryland and Virginia. The larger farms grew into opulent plantations. Slaves cut timber into

fence rails to enclose ever larger fields, to demarcate their master's property, and to protect crops from free ranging livestock. Much more than fences came to separate people living side by side as slaves and freemen. These social divisions created a new world in tidewater areas, a world marked by increasing extremes of wealth and poverty.

As the most favorable coastal plain locales were taken up, tidewater speculators began staking claims to lands above the fall line in the Maryland and Virginia Piedmont. Although European explorers traveled up the rivers coursing through the Piedmont by the 1650s, no permanent English settlements had been built in the region. This situation changed dramatically after Bacon's Rebellion broke out in 1675. This revolt started when poorer settlers, resenting the government's failure to protect them from Indian attack, rebelled against royal authority. Fighting began when colonists attacked Susquehannocks, who had been ordered by Maryland authorities to settle on the Potomac to protect provincial frontiers from attacks by other Indians. Retaliating Susquehannock war parties soon devastated farms along the Blue Ridge frontier. Unable to avenge themselves on the Susquehannocks and resenting the prerogatives of powerful, well placed landowners whose privileges came in part from royal favor, angered colonists ransacked homes of wealthy planters and captured and burned the city of Jamestown. After gaining control over much of the colony, Nathaniel Bacon died suddenly (probably of dysentery), and the revolt was quickly suppressed. Taking advantage of the situation, Virginian authorities reduced all remaining Indians in the province to tributary status at the 1677 Treaty of Middle Plantation regardless of whether or not they had supported the Susquehannocks in the fighting. Wealthy tidewater families soon claimed the lands of the Susquehannocks and those of other nations driven out during the rebellion.

Tidewater residents and new immigrants from Europe purchased the first Piedmont lands and established farmsteads near the banks of the James and other major rivers. They dammed fast running streams flowing into these rivers and erected mills to grind grain, saw wood, run bellows, and crush iron and other ores extracted from nearby mines and quarries. And an influx of Scots-Irish and German refugees, forced from their own homelands, quickened the pace and scope of penetration in the early 1700s. These immigrants began moving southwest from Pennsylvania's Delaware Valley into unsettled portions of Piedmont valleys.

They and other settlers encountered a Piedmont landscape dominated by dense tangled forests. These had not existed before warfare, disease, and dislocation virtually ended Indian burning practices that cleared undergrowth from large areas of woodland. Armed with steel axes and using water driven saw mills, colonists soon began clearing timber from the richest, best drained soils. They used whole trees, sawn planks, and split shingles to build log cabins and frame houses and barns. And, using river cobbles, quarried stone, and bricks fired from riverbank clay, they built homes, churches, and other structures. They fashioned split wooden rails and piled fieldstones into fences surrounding fields and pens. Earthen dams impounded ponds that watered their free ranging livestock and provided power to drive mill wheels. Laboring on their own holdings, Piedmont settlers created a patchwork of miniature environments that increasingly transformed the region's landscape. Level, graded sunken roads bordered Piedmont fields, forests, and mill ponds. Hard packed dirt paths soon grew into a network linking communities throughout the area. Before long, town centers began growing in places such as Lancaster, Pennsylvania (1730); Frederick, Maryland (built as a county seat in 1748); and Charlottesville, Virginia (incorporated in 1762).

Almost the entire Chesapeake Bay region was intensively settled by the mid-1700s. In the coastal plain, a small number of established families and the newly rich acquired more and more slaves and erected ever larger and more lavish plantation houses. Most coastal plain landowners lived more modestly, in small frame or brick houses on holdings rarely over 200 acres. Farther inland, the few larger estates of powerful families (such as Monticello, built by Thomas Jefferson at Charlottesville in 1770) were surrounded by the more modest homesteads of newcomers from the tidewater and those of even newer immigrants from England, Scotland, Ireland, and Germany. Seeking new lands and new profits, tidewater natives and Piedmont pioneers soon began staking claims to Indian territory beyond the Blue Ridge Mountains.

Social tensions abounded between rich and poor, male and female, slave and free, old settler and newcomer. These provided fertile ground for the Great Awakening, a religious revival movement that swept through the British American provinces between 1738 and 1745. Promoting social and racial equality in the eyes of God, its leading lights – including Presbyterian minister Samuel Davies, New England immigrant Baptist preacher Shubal Stearns, and African American missionary John Marrant – encouraged a more personal, emotional form of worship that freed participants from the restraints of more controlled church hierarchies. Also on the religious front, forerunners of today's Plain Sect communities and members of other pious orders persecuted in Europe established settlements in the Piedmont country, drawn by promises of religious tolerance. These immigrants were meticulous craftspeople, and their experiments with existing technologies resulted in the development of such improvements as the Conestoga wagon and the Pennsylvania long rifle.

Although they were growing more and more able to produce life's necessities themselves, Chesapeake Bay colonists relied on trade for products that were locally unavailable for luxury items, and for new ideas and fashions. The British attempted to limit provincial development and raise their colonial income by regulating this trade and imposing new taxes. These tactics caused increasing unrest throughout the region in the third quarter of the eighteenth century. By 1775 – the end of the period covered by this chapter – a rebellion had broken out in British America. Threatened by the extension of imperial authority, powerful families such as the Washingtons, Lees, and Jeffersons led large numbers of Chesapeake Bay colonists in revolt.

Place

As in all periods, geological research supplies much of the available information about the environment in the Chesapeake Bay region between 1500 and 1775. Like archeologists, geologists use radiometric techniques to date bits of naturally buried soil strata recovered from core samples, drilling at sites throughout the region. But such techniques must be used with care. Single assays can provide date ranges sometimes present a potential range of variation extending over several hundred years. The broadness of such date ranges requires the testing of multiple samples from deposits less than 500 years old.

Archeologists, too, continue to uncover living floors and pits, shell heaps, and other deposits containing bones, charred wood and plants, pollen, and other indicators of past environments. All plants and animals require specific environmental conditions. Comparative analyses of remains of biological communities in a single locale can reveal the range of climate conditions at a particular time.

Written records first begin to supplement geological and archeological evidence as sources of environmental information during this period. Ships' logs, settlers' diaries, more detailed observations by contemporary naturalists such as John Banister and John Clayton, and other records written by European colonists preserve the earliest written records of the region's plants, animals, geology, weather, and climate. And several English herbarium collections preserve to this day the plant specimens gathered by botanists such as Hugh Jones and William Vernon. Lacking precise instruments, these observers of nature were generally limited to impressionistic statements regarding soils, winds, waves, or weather. Although their writings document an environment generally resembling current conditions, scholars continue to assess the ecological impacts of deforestation, intensive cultivation, and other environmentally transforming colonial practices.

According to both archeological evidence and colonial observations, the region's climate was somewhat wetter and cooler than today's in the 1500s. It moderated between 1650 and 1750. Then, from 1750 to 1800, temperatures cooled into what is often called a Little Ice-Age. But the form and content of Chesapeake Bay itself largely resembled its current condition. Very little is known about plant life in the Bay's open waters during this period. But archeological evidence affirms written accounts noting that oysters and many species of fish, mammals, shellfish, and plankton lived in these waters. Sea grasses, juvenile fish, crabs, and migratory waterfowl made their homes in shallower portions of the Bay.

Then as now, sandy and gravelly beaches lined Bay shores. Beaches covered by tidewaters supported communities of shellfish, insects, and migratory birds. Saltmarsh and saltmeadow cordgrasses, American holly, saltgrass, and other plants resistant to salt spray supported a wide variety of insects, mammals, and birds; these plants also stabilized dunes and bluffs above the high

tide mark. Preserved pollen samples affirm colonial accounts of extensive salt, brackish, and freshwater marshes and swamp lands alongside the region's watercourses. An abundance of species such as wild celery, coontail, common waterweed, eelgrass, Southern naiad, and curly pondweed (an early introduction from Europe) were noted by contemporary observers.

Neither Indians nor colonists spent much time in Chesapeake swamp lands, aside from using them as places for refuge during conflict or for brief hunting, fishing, and gathering excursions. Mosquitoes, flies, and other pests deterred visitors in warmer months. Early colonial activities altered wetland habitats – small landfills undergirded docks and wharves in sheltered harbors, and saltmarsh grasses served as cattle pasture – but did not extensively impact water plants or their environments. This situation changed when deposits of iron nodules were discovered in bogs during the 1730s and 1740s. This discovery stimulated the development of iron furnaces and mills smelting bog ore into pig iron ingots and cast iron stove plates, fire backs, and other products at various coastal plain locales. And forest clearing caused greater amounts of soil sediment to wash into Bay waters, decreasing the light reaching submerged plants. Although direct evidence is lacking, such changes almost surely damaged plants not adapted to lower light levels.

Mature, old growth forests covered as much as ninety-five percent of the region in 1500. Southern mixed hardwood forests grew throughout the coastal plain. Oaks and hickories dominated higher ground, while red maples, gums, Atlantic white cedars, and bald cypresses grew in swampy lowlands. Loblolly and other pines occupied poor or sandy soils. Farther inland in the Piedmont, American chestnuts and a variety of oaks, poplars, and hickories dominated the forests. Shrubs, berry bushes, sedges, and grasses grew on forest margins, meadows, swamps, and other

sunny clearings opened by flooding, windfalls, or fires. Some of these fires occurred naturally or by accident; others were deliberately set to clear underbrush and drive game during group hunts.

By 1775, colonists had cut and burned as much as thirty percent of the coastal plain forests. Tidewater bog iron furnaces also consumed increasing quantities of wood. Farther inland, Piedmont forests also began falling to the axes of settlers clearing lands for farms, firewood, fencing, and charcoal to fuel their new iron furnaces.

Because of the rapid loss of open space and the sixty or so species of exotic Old World plants brought in by settlers, many native species declined in number. Many of the new species were deliberately introduced cultivated plants such as wheat, apple trees, and grape vines. Others were weeds, which spread from seeds accidently brought into the country in bales of fodder, seed bags, livestock hides, or manure. Newly introduced tropical plants, such as oranges, only flourished in the artificial environments of greenhouses.

Both natives and newcomers took care to protect desirable plants. Indian people practiced rituals respecting plant spirits; colonists used laws to protect white oaks and other economically valuable trees from over-cutting. Other native plants were cultivated in colonial gardens, such as poison ivy, which was prized for its shiny leaves. But the most significant impact on regional vegetation patterns were the new uses for established crops such as tobacco and the introduction of exotic, Old World field crops. We still do not fully understand the ecological effects of field agriculture. But, as mentioned earlier, tobacco cultivation quickly used up soil fertility, requiring frequent moves to new and ever larger expanses of land. Abandoned farmsteads and fields created a messy, depleted physical landscape that encouraged the growth of weeds and pests. And contemporary descriptions remark on the increasing murkiness of many regional rivers and

streams, affirming that ground clearing caused growing amounts of sediment to pour into regional rivers.

As for diet, Indian people ate shellfish and crafted their shells into beads and other ornaments. The first European colonists also depended on shellfish for subsistence. Initially, they even adopted Indian shell beads (known as wampum, peake, or roanoke) as their currency, until enough of their own coinage was available. Shell heaps and other archeological evidence confirm what the earliest colonial written records document: the presence of extensive oyster beds in Chesapeake Bay waters. Crabs, shrimp, hard and soft clams, and other shellfish were also abundant. At first, people collected most shellfish from shallow waters. Later, they used metal tongs mounted on long wooden poles, which enabled them to exploit oyster beds in deeper waters. But despite these harvesting activities, neither group had the technology or the desire to exhaust the riches of Chesapeake Bay's shellfish communities during this period of contact and colonization.

Those trying to exploit the Chesapeake Bay region's natural environment faced significant challenges. Early European chroniclers wrote of the clouds of mosquitoes and flies that rose over Bay shores in warmer months, and they chronicled the struggles of farmers with the many kinds of worms, beetles, and other insects that preyed on their garden plants and field crops. These writers also complained of the fleas, lice, and other small insects that infested their homes, clothes, and bodies. Early attempts to put insects to economic uses met with mixed success. Beekeepers successfully extracted honey from hives, but attempts to raise silkworms on mulberry trees failed.

Indians and settlers used nets, traps, spears, and hooked lines to catch numerous types of fish – deepwater fish such as striped bass and herring; smaller saltwater fish such as smelts and

eels; and freshwater fish such as trout, bass, and pickerel. Both peoples also valued the large runs of American shad and other fish that spawned in freshwater streams in the spring. Many settlers adapted Indian dugout log canoes into fishing vessels with sails. Many Indians, for their part, adopted the shallow draft sailing ships with plank hulls and the metal ship furnishings introduced by colonials. As with the shellfish, neither natives nor newcomers had the technology or the desire to devastate Bay fish stocks during this period. Even so, by 1680, Virginian legislators had enacted a law preventing wasteful harvests of fish stocks in the Rappahannock River. By the 1700s, seafood became more of a supplement than a staple in the colonists' diet, as domestic animals were their chief food source. Still, commercial fishing for herring and shad began in the 1760s and 1770s.

Colonial chroniclers noted many of the species of snakes, frogs, toads, salamanders, lizards, and turtles residing in the region today. Observers were most impressed by venomous reptiles, such as the eastern rattlesnakes and copperheads in the Piedmont and the eastern cottonmouths along the coastal plain. Indians regarded these reptiles with respect. Colonists treated them as economically useless pests and killed them when ventured into settled areas. Turtles, such as freshwater common snapping turtles and saltwater northern diamondback terrapins, were hunted for their flesh, shells, and eggs. Free ranging pigs and other animals introduced by colonists were avid hunters of snakes. Still, most populations of snakes and other cold blooded animals were not significantly disturbed by people or their animals in these years.

Both archeological evidence and colonial writings affirm the presence of great flocks of herons, ducks, geese, and other migratory waterfowl in Chesapeake Bay waters. Least sandpipers, common terns, and other shorebirds flourished on Bay beaches. In the forests and fields of the

coastal plain and Piedmont, pigeons, songbirds, birds of prey, scavengers, and many other kinds of birds made their homes. Colonists seeking meat for their tables and feathers for their beds used nets, traps, and muzzle loading shotguns to take large numbers of waterfowl. Farther inland, Piedmont farmers hunted partridges, wild turkeys, and other game birds. Grain from farm fields and the many fruit and nut bearing trees planted by colonists may have helped increase the numbers of passenger pigeons, which lived in vast flocks in the region.

Many large and small mammals lived in the region during this period of contact and colonization. Porpoises and other sea mammals swam regularly into Chesapeake Bay. Indians and colonists hunted and trapped beavers, muskrats, otters, and other furry mammals. Farther inland, both peoples frequently used dogs to help them hunt the white-tailed deer, black bear, raccoon, elk, bobcat, woodland American bison, and other animals for flesh and fur. Powhatan and other coastal plain people regarded rabbits as a holy animal and refrained from hunting them, but colonists had no such reservations.

Settlers introduced horses, sheep, cattle, pigs, and other domestic animals to the region. Although some were penned, many ranged freely in unfenced lands. Free ranging animals tended to feed on acorns, nuts, and other forest products that colonists called mast. These animals also broke into unfenced or untended Indian and colonial gardens and fields. The bobcats, cougars, and wolves that preyed on these animals were viewed as pests. Colonial governments sponsored extermination campaigns and offered bounties for animals killed, resulting in the virtual extinction of these animals in settled portions of the tidewater area by 1750. Game, too, became scarce as population grew and forests shrank. Alarmed, provincial legislators began declaring certain

seasons off limits for hunting. Farther inland, hunters had all but eradicated woodland American bison from Piedmont forests by 1775, when the American War for Independence broke out.

Overall, the archeological, geological, and archival evidence suggests that native species, having adapted to local conditions over several thousand years, continued to live in the region's waters, wetlands, and forests. Indians only introduced exotic domesticated plants such as corn, beans, squash, and tobacco in small clearings that had been slashed and burned out of the forest. Until driven away or restricted to small reservations, they also continued to deliberately burn other portions of woodland during seasonal game drives to create the clear, open park-like forest floors recorded by impressed colonial chroniclers. The colonists cut, burned, plowed, and fenced ever larger tracts of land as they introduced new species of wild and domesticated plants and animals to the region and deliberately tried to exterminate wolves, panthers, and other native animals considered dangerous or bothersome. Although few native species completely disappeared from the region in this period, those that remained shared a vastly transformed environment, one containing new land forms and uses as well as imported life forms.

THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPES OF CONTACT AND COLONIZATION

Peopling Places

The population of the region changed as never before in the period of contact and colonization. The territories of coastal plain chiefdoms rose, grew, and shrank with their leaders' changing fortunes. Further inland, war and disease caused entire Piedmont Native communities to disappear or move elsewhere. European invasion significantly quickened the pace of demographic change. New diseases such as smallpox ravaged Indian communities. Warriors armed with guns fought

with their Indian and European enemies in wars, suffering heavy losses in lives and lands. Indian population throughout the region may have declined by as much as ninety percent between 1500 and 1650, from an estimated peak of 24,000 in 1500 to less than 2,400 by 1650.

By contrast, the combined population of English colonists and enslaved Africans rose from zero to nearly 13,000 in the same period. Beginning in 1607, colonial population in the region doubled every twenty years. It rose to 380,000 in 1750. Total colonial population in the Chesapeake Bay area reached 700,000 in 1775. More than a third of this number were Africans, mostly enslaved. Although English settlers still made up the majority of the region's population in this period, the number of Scots-Irish and German immigrants grew significantly in the decades after 1775.

Indians of several nations were the region's sole inhabitants in 1500. This situation had changed dramatically by 1775. By 1650, the coastal plain nations had lost many people to war and disease. Those who remained were restricted to small tracts around their traditional core communities. Farther inland, most aboriginal Piedmont populations were forced to move away, scattered, or destroyed during these same years. To the north, Susquehannock immigrants erected their towns on the banks of the lower Susquehanna River in and around present day Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Farther south and east, English colonists and enslaved Africans quickly moved outward from colonial centers such as Jamestown. By the mid-1600s, many lived on farmsteads on easily cultivated stretches of riverbank in the coastal plain. As mentioned above, much of the English population and nearly all Africans remained in the coastal plain throughout the period. In the later decades of the period, tens of thousands of German and Scots-Irish immigrants settled in the Piedmont area.

Creation of Social Institutions

Although archeologists and scholars disagree about their identity and social development, most agree that the Indian cultures of the region were already experiencing cultural change by 1607, nearly a century after the first Europeans traveled into Chesapeake Bay. As mentioned earlier, Susquehannocks fleeing Iroquois enemies and seeking new lands near rich resources moved south onto the Piedmont lands of the Shenks Ferry people by 1575. Farther south, members of what archeologists call the Potomac Creek culture pressed eastwards for reasons still unknown down the Potomac and Rappahannock rivers onto the coastal plain, where they became known as Potomacs, Rappahannocks, and Nanticokes. And everywhere, Indian communities came together in new combinations and developed new cultural identities.

Many Chesapeake Bay native people, then, were driven into exile. But those who were not had to adopt new cultural practices to better resist European invasion and, eventually, adjust to life on small reservations surrounded by strangers from Europe and Africa. These newcomers also adopted new cultural patterns, adjusting old customs and beliefs to fit new realities. This nearness to foreign cultures affected everyone. Native people struggling to survive often created new identities that set them apart from neighbors and newcomers. Formerly independent nations on the Potomac and Eastern Shores, for example, merged together to form more unified communities today known as Piscataways and Nanticokes during the 1600s. And both they and other Indians in the region integrated European dress, technology, religions, and other foreign elements into their cultures.

Indians, Europeans, and Africans also came more and more to consider themselves and each other as distinct races. Free, enslaved, and indentured people distinguished themselves from one another, while rich merchants and farmers claimed the privileges and respect accorded nobility in their mother countries. In the Piedmont region, many immigrants from Scotland and Ireland established what scholars refer to as a backwoods cultural identity, which was closely tied to an emerging frontier ethos. In contrast, the tidewater society was dominated by the same kinds of Englishmen as those ruling the home country. And whatever their race, class, or caste, people in particular provinces began to form provincial identities. Eventually, all became Americans.

The social lives of all Chesapeake Bay people centered on the family. Indian families tended to be large groups of kin tracing relations back many generations. These were linked to other families and communities by bonds of marriage and alliance. By contrast, colonial families generally consisted of a single set of spouses, their children, and a few other relatives, all living in a single household. Both natives and newcomers hoped for many children. Children shared household chores, and a large number assured that the family would continue, as many of those born did not live to reach maturity.

Both Indians and colonists divided labor along gender lines. Although particularly talented women could rise to leadership positions in both societies, men usually dominated public life. Indian and colonial women took care of domestic responsibilities and played prominent roles in religious life, food processing, and marketing. Men’s first responsibility was to protect the community from harm, but they also hunted game and performed heavy labor. Both colonial men and women did farmwork, but only Indian women cultivated planting fields. Although colonial women could and did own property, customs limiting their right to vote resulted in legal codes

favoring men. Indian law focused on matters of concern to families and communities, and it allowed both men and women to voice their concerns and interests.

Expressing Cultural Values

All Chesapeake Bay Indian societies believed in a Great Spirit, in the presence of a spiritual essence in all matter, and in an afterlife. Each honored these beliefs with their own rituals, ceremonies, and traditions. Organized priesthoods drew members from influential families. These priests ran religious ceremonies in coastal plain chiefdoms. Piedmont people, in contrast, followed the guidance of individual medicine men and women blessed by visions. Indian families oversaw the education of their young and the assimilation of adopted war captives, foreign spouses, and other outsiders.

Protestant ministers and Catholic priests urged Indian people to convert to Christianity. Although most Indian people who chose to remain in their homelands did convert, many continued to also practice their traditional religions. Exiled from home and isolated from countryfolk, enslaved and free Africans did what they could to maintain their traditional beliefs. Indians and Africans were not the only people whose spiritual traditions were challenged by change in this period; members of different Christian denominations found themselves at odds with one another as well. Political changes in the home country resulted in the struggles pitting Catholic, Anglican, and Puritan colonists against one another. And the Great Awakening challenged the authority of established Protestant denominations. This religious revival, as mentioned, swept across the region in the mid- to late 1700s. Ministers preached what became known as New Light doctrines, promoting social equality in the eyes of God. This reflected and

stimulated desires for freedom that found expression when the War for Independence broke out in 1775.

As with the Indians, European and African families saw to the education of younger children. For further study, churches or church societies operated schools of higher learning, such as the College of William and Mary, which was opened in Williamsburg in 1693. These schools educated the children of colonial elites and small numbers of Indian converts.

Indian people in the region made many objects to represent the spiritual powers underlying their beliefs. These included masks and costumes, carved posts, charms, tobacco pipes, and line drawings cut into or painted on rocks, cliffs, and boulders. Coastal plain priests managed temples, shrines, dancing grounds, and group burial sites. Piedmont people worshiped on town dance grounds, in the houses of chiefs, and at hidden, sacred places at rapids, caves, and other locations they thought served as passages to the spirit world. Piedmont families buried their dead individually or in cemetery enclosures. They marked graves with wooden posts, offerings, and mementos.

Colonists made markings in the landscape of this period as well. Protestant and Catholic settlers marked many of their settlements with the spires of frame, brick, or stone churches. Most were narrow structures containing rows of pews divided by a central aisle. Ministers and priests ran the services from altars and speaking platforms at the end of this aisle; baptismal fonts were generally on the side of the building. The steeples at the tops of the buildings held crosses, and these steeples housed bells rung to call congregations to worship. Those living in or near settlements buried their dead in graveyards next to places of worship. Plantation and farm families in remote locations tended to bury family members and slaves in separate graveyards on their

property. Today, we can see the beliefs, values, and traditions of the colonists of this period most visibly in their churches, graves, and college campuses.

Chesapeake colonists also supported more secular cultural institutions as time went on. Many settlers expressed themselves through what we now call folk painting and carving. Theater first came to the colonies when Scottish merchant William Levingston opened the first playhouse in Williamsburg in 1717. Limited by the region's lack of suitably trained actors, Levingston solved the problem by offering indentures to actors and actresses willing to bring British theater to the colonies.

Shaping the Political Landscape

Coastal plain Indian societies were ruled by chiefs born to lead. Farther inland, Piedmont communities chose chiefs according to their abilities and merit. Whatever system was used, all Chesapeake Bay Indian people relied on consensus throughout this period. Community members responded cooperatively to problems and opportunities, working collectively to shape their political landscape. But the shape of this political landscape changed dramatically through contact with Europeans. The Europeans used a complex political system that balanced inherited leadership positions with leaders appointed for their abilities to lead. Effectively using this system, Europeans managed to seize control of the region by the third quarter of the seventeenth century.

Provincial governors and their lieutenants were appointed or approved by the Crown. They were advised by councils made up of influential colonists. Each province had a legislature, whose members were periodically elected by property owning freemen who represented voting districts such as counties and parishes. This legislature was responsible for enacting laws and raising revenues to pay the governor's salary and cover other costs of government. During this

period, provincial legislators – all men – did not extend voting rights to Indians, Africans, Jews, indentured servants, or their wives and most other colonial women. Some people supported the concept of autocratic rule by hereditary nobilities. Others favored opening government to all of people of proven ability regardless of background. People were further divided by differences in class, religion, locality, ethnicity, and opinion. Tensions between such groups flared up often, but open violence of the type briefly acted out in Bacon's Rebellion did not beciome widespread until the Revolutionary War broke out in 1775.

Developing the Chesapeake Economy

Indian economies centered on hunting, fishing, foraging, and cultivating gardens at the beginning of this period. Deer, bear, and other animals provided meat and fat for food, bone and sinew for tools, and skin for clothing and shelter. Fish, shellfish, wildfowl, wild berries and nuts, corn, beans, and squash appeared on Indian menus in season. Since they depended mostly on resources available at certain times and locations, Indian people periodically moved from place to place to harvest economically important minerals, plants, and animals. Although some long distance trade occurred, most Chesapeake Bay Indian people depended on local systems of production and exchange.

In early contacts with Europeans, Indians began participating in an exchange economy in which they traded furs, food, and information for metal tools, glass beads, cloth and woolen textiles, and other manufactured goods. Pressing ever westward to tap new markets and supplies, the fur trade played a significant role in the changing economic fortunes of Indians and those doing business with them. It continued to do so in later years, as we will see in the next chapter.

Indians in the Chesapeake Bay region grew dependent on trade with Europeans in this period, but they did not lose the ability to feed, clothe, and shelter themselves.

The English settlers also valued self sufficiency. To attain it, they quickly developed agricultural economies able to sustain their new colonies. At first they adopted Indian crops. Then they used their growing numbers of slaves to clear enough land to grow wheat and other Old World grains. Their imported, free ranging pigs and cattle provided meat and leather for colonists and ravaged unfenced Indian gardens. Horses and oxen drew plows and pulled wagons on new dirt roads. Dammed Piedmont streams and coastal plain winds and tidal waters powered the region's mills.

The colonists also grew and processed tobacco in increasing quantities. Tobacco became the export item that moved the colonial economy beyond basic subsistence. Used as a medium of exchange in the cash starved region, tobacco was shipped overseas, and its value was returned in the forms of manufactured goods, slaves, and other imports. Many coastal plain planters soon started buying and selling goods, thus becoming merchants. Merchants traded imported items for the timber being cut and milled in the Piedmont. They soon began building ships, docks, and warehouses in ports along navigable stretches of Chesapeake Bay waterways. This trade became so important to the region's economy that the Crown's efforts to regulate it played a major role in convincing many Chesapeake Bay colonists to resist extension of royal authority in the region.

Expanding Science and Technology

Chesapeake Bay Indian technology consisted primarily of stone, bone, shell, horn, wood, clay, fiber, and unsmelted copper implements at the beginning of this period. They fashioned clay into

cooking and storage pots and tobacco pipes. They spun milkweed and hemp into cordage and knitted it into baskets and bags. They quarried stone from outcrops or gathered cobbles in streams, then chipped or ground it to fashion hatchets, knives, scrapers, spearheads, and other tools that they tied, glued, or inserted into handles of wood, bone, or horn. Chipped stone projectile points also tipped arrow shafts, while ground stone hatchets cut down trees and chipped charred wood from the hearts of logs, which Indians hollowed out to fashion canoes.

Europeans brought another form of technology to the region, one based on smelted metal, glass, and spun fabric. Unlike Indians, who relied mostly on fire and their own muscles for power, colonists also harnessed the energies of wind, water, and domesticated animals. Indians adopted those aspects of European technology that fit their needs and tastes. Far from destroying their cultures, this gradual Indian adoption of aspects of European technology helped them adapt to the stresses of contact in this period.

Potters and other colonist artisans along the coastal plain kept abreast of technological developments in Europe, and great changes also came from Europe to the interior. German and Scandinavian immigrants built log houses in the Piedmont that resembled those common in their home countries. Piedmont immigrants tended charcoal fired furnaces to smelt iron ore quarried from nearby mines. And, as noted above, these immigrants even improved on existing technologies. Immigrant artisans developed glassworks near exposed outcrops of sand, transformed smoothbore musket technology into the highly accurate long ranged Pennsylvania long rifle, built sturdy Conestoga wagons from the region’s abundant wood and iron resources, crafted cast iron plows, and produced other implements using local materials to create tools adapted to cope with American conditions.

Transforming the Environment

Most scholars agree that the first centuries of contact between Indians, European, and Africans resulted in the most environment change in the region since the last Ice-Age. As mentioned earlier, ecological relationships in forest communities had been long maintained by periodic burning, but this stopped when Indians were forced from entire areas. Leaving unused woodlands unmanaged, Europeans cut all of the trees from increasingly vast areas to create planting grounds and produce lumber and charcoal.

The colonists' actions resulted in the exposure of formerly forest covered soils and in new bodies of standing water impounded behind mill dams. Conditions in these new miniature environments differed from those surrounding them. They were characterized by changed temperature, humidity, and groundwater levels, as well as by increased erosion. River borne sediments and nutrients rose as the overall volumes of dammed rivers fell. And nutrient rich, slow moving or still water provided ideal breeding grounds for mosquitoes and other insects. These insects carried malaria, yellow fever, and other diseases affecting people and other animals. And when these altered waters flowed into Chesapeake Bay, they changed conditions in spawning grounds, hatcheries, shellfish beds, and other habitats.

Further inland, sediments washing into waterways from deforested lands gradually made smaller rivers unnavigable. Early port towns, such as Bladensburg, on the Anacostia River across from present Washington, D.C., Joppa Town, on the Gunpowder River above present Baltimore, and, most notably, Port Tobacco, at the mouth of the creek of the same name, fell into decline after silt filled their waterways and closed them to commerce.

Contact also resulted in the introduction of many new species and the reduction or disappearance of others. Mostly because Europeans valued the furs of certain animals highly and Indians trapped these animals to sell them, the populations of these animals fell drastically. And because Old World domesticated animals such as pigs, cattle, and horses were allowed to forage freely in forests and salt meadows, they altered environments and competed with native animals for food and shelter. As mentioned above, settlers in the region all but eradicated wolves, panthers, and other predators because they preyed on these domestic animals. Accidents also influenced the environment; unintentionally introduced plants and animals such as honeysuckle vines, blue grasses, Norway rats, and domestic cats transformed regional ecologies. And, as mentioned, some scholars believe that the large amounts of fruit hanging on newly planted orchard trees in this period may have helped raise the population of passenger pigeons to unstable levels. Passing flocks of these birds were said to blot out the sun for hours at a time, until hunters slaughtered them to extinction a century later.

Larger environmental shifts, such as the Little Ice-Age that lowered temperatures throughout the world in the second half of the 1700s, also affected ecological relationships in ways that are still not clearly understood. Although greater changes would occur in subsequent years, the beginnings of many transformations in the regional environmental can be traced to this period.

Changing Role of the Chesapeake in the World Community

Contact between Indians, Europeans, and Africans in the Chesapeake Bay region opened a wider world than any of these groups had ever known. Each discovered people, practices, and

possibilities never imagined. And, forced to live together, all were transformed. Because they needed to bend somewhat to survive in this new social setting, new beliefs, customs, and identities grew. In the Chesapeake, these accommodations created several new sorts of society. One, centered on the coastal plain, was a slave based economy of tidewater plantations, rationalized by a new ideology of race. Another was a new Piedmont backwoods culture that valued self reliance, innovation, and dominance over Indians, who were forced into isolated reservations in remote, barren lands and swamps.

At first the Chesapeake coastal plain was a frontier on the borders of Indian, European, and African worlds. Gradually, it combined elements of these worlds to create a unique cultural identity. Tidewater people built and sailed oceangoing vessels, importing and exporting goods and ideas quickly and with relative ease. Farther west, the Piedmont became a frontier to this cosmopolitan tidewater culture. When war broke out in 1775, then, locally born Chesapeake residents and new immigrants fought the war as people who had grown apart from their mother countries and transformed themselves into a new society.

KEY LOCALES

National Historic Landmarks

District of Columbia

Georgetown Historic District [18th-20th centuries]

Maryland

Brice House [1773], Annapolis, Anne Arundel County
Chase-Lloyd House [1774], Annapolis, Anne Arundel County
Chestertown Historic District [18th century], Kent County
Colonial Annapolis Historic District [17th-18th centuries],

Anne Arundel County
Doughoregan Manor [ca. 1727], Howard County
Habre-de-Venture [1771], Charles County
Hammond-Harwood House [ca. 1774], Annapolis, Anne Arundel County
His Lordship's Kindness [ca. 1735], Prince George's County
London Town Publik House [ca. 1750], Anne Arundel County
Maryland State House [ca. 1772], Annapolis, Anne Arundel County
Montpelier [ca. 1745], Prince George's County
Mount Clare [ca. 1763], Baltimore City
William Paca House [1765], Annapolis, Anne Arundel County
Resurrection Manor [ca. 1660], St. Mary's County
St. Mary's City Historic District [1634-1695], St. Mary's County
Peggy Stewart House [1764], Annapolis, Anne Arundel County
Tulip Hill [1756], Anne Arundel County
West St. Mary's Manor [18th century], St. Mary's County
Whitehall [ca. 1765], Annapolis, Anne Arundel County

Pennsylvania

Cornwall Iron Furnace [1742], Lebanon County
Ephrata Cloister [1746], Lancaster County
Robert Fulton Birthplace [ca. 1765], Lancaster County
Stiegel-Coleman House [1758], Lancaster County

Virginia

Alexandria Historic District [18th century], Alexandria City
Bacon's Castle [ca. 1655], Surry County
Belmont [1761], Stafford County
Berkeley [1726], Charles City County
Brandon [ca. 1720], Prince George County
Bruton Parish Church [1715], Williamsburg City
Camden [17th-19th centuries], Caroline County
Carter's Grove [18th century], James City County
Christ Church [1732], Lancaster County
Christ Church [1768], Alexandria City
Elsing Green [1758], King William County
Gadsby's Tavern [1752], Alexandria City
Green Springs Historic District [18th-19th centuries], Louisa County
Greenway Court [1762], Clarke County
Gunston Hall [1758], Fairfax County
Hanover County Courthouse [1735], Hanover County
Kenmore [1752], Fredericksburg City
Menokin [ca. 1769], Richmond County
James Monroe Law Office [1758], Fredericksburg City

Monticello [1770-1789], Albemarle County
Montpelier [ca. 1760], Orange County
Mount Airy [1762], Richmond County
Mount Vernon [ca. 1743], Fairfax County
Peyton Randolph House [1715], Williamsburg City
Rising Sun Tavern [1760], Fredericksburg City
Sabine Hall [ca. 1730], Richmond County
St. John's Episcopal Church [1741], Richmond County
St. Luke's Church [1682], Isle of Wight County
Scotchtown [1719], Hanover County
James Semple House [ca. 1770], Williamsburg City
Shirley [1770], Charles City County
Stratford Hall [1730], Westmoreland County
Adam Thoroughgood House [ca. 1640], Virginia Beach
Tuckahoe [ca. 1712], Goochland County
Waterford Historic District [18th-19th centuries], Loudon County
Westover [1734], Charles City County
Williamsburg Historic District [1633-1779], Williamsburg City
Wren Building [1702], Williamsburg City
Wythe House [ca. 1755], Williamsburg City
Yecomico Church [18th century], Westmoreland County

FURTHER INFORMATION

Books and Articles

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James P. Thomas, editor, *Chesapeake* (1986).
David A. Zegers, editor, *At the Crossroads: A Natural History of Southcentral Pennsylvania* (1994).

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Carville V. Earle, *The Evolution of a Tidewater Settlement System* (1975).
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